

Patient Opinion & the Third Sector

Patient Opinion is a not-for-profit social enterprise, which uses the power of the web to carry the voices of patients and carers into the heart of health services.

Patient Opinion aims to make it quick, easy and safe for patients and carers to give feedback about their health care, and for health service providers to respond to and make use of feedback for service improvement.

Who set this up and who runs it?

Patient Opinion was established in 2005 by Dr Paul Hodgkin, a GP in Sheffield who wanted to make the wisdom of patients available across the NHS. He devised Patient Opinion as a way for thousands of patients to share their experience and help busy health services staff to hear about those experiences. Patient Opinion has been working with health services across the UK for almost 10 years and in Scotland since 2011.

Patient Opinion is run by an enthusiastic and committed team with its own independent board.

What does Patient Opinion do?

Patient Opinion provides a [web site](#) where anyone can share their recent experience of local health services, and see what others are saying. Stories can be submitted to the site online, or by post or telephone.

When a story is published on the site, Patient Opinion can automatically tell relevant health service subscribers, who may then respond online. If this response shows that a change has been made to the service, the Patient Opinion website highlights this, for everyone to see.

When the response is published, Patient Opinion automatically tells the author of the story as well as other interested organisations.

The result is short, public online exchanges which show how patients are experiencing services, and how services are listening and responding to that experience.

All stories posted on Patient Opinion are read before publication. Postings which are commercial, offensive or defamatory will not be published – though we publish 95% of the postings received.

How can the Third Sector get involved?

We offer Voluntary and Third Sector organisations free registration to encourage their involvement in online conversations.



With Patient Opinion, you can:

- Get immediate alerts to the latest patient stories relating to your area of interest, eg stroke, diabetes, depression (these stories can also be selected by location);
- Use this feedback to inform discussions with your local health service providers;
- Identify emerging themes in stories related to the organisation's area of interest;
- Respond to stories online, putting across your view, raising your online profile and widening public understanding of your role;
- Keep track of which services are responding to and acting on feedback;
- Show you take feedback seriously by bringing it onto your own site with our API feeds and easy to install widgets.

How can you get the most from Patient Opinion?

- To hear what your communities have to say about their health and social care experiences we need your help to raise their awareness of Patient Opinion. After all, we can't have stories coming out without stories coming in.
- Inviting us to speak at events is one way to achieve this, others include distributing flyers and posters to individuals in your networks, as well as allowing people to tell their story on Patient Opinion via your website itself (don't worry - its easily accomplished!).

Want to know more?

If you want to know more about working with Patient Opinion in Scotland, please get in touch with us.

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Follow us on Twitter @PO_Scotland and Facebook

